



South Dakota Department of the Military South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs



SD GUARD RECEIVES ARMY COMMUNITIES OF EXCELLENCE AWARD

The South Dakota Army National Guard received a second place finish in the bronze category for the 2013 Army Communities of Excellence Awards. The SDARNG placed 9th overall among 40 applicants in the Army National Guard. This was the first organizational self-assessment the SDARNG has submitted for the award in the past 10 years.

The ACOE Awards follow a 12-month evaluation in which Army, National Guard and Reserve installations are scored using the Malcolm Baldrige criteria for performance excellence. Participants are not judged against each other, but scored on how well they can demonstrate the maturity of key organizational processes and their ability to show results in key areas. The assessment considers how senior leaders lead, how the SDARNG focuses on the future needs of its customers, how it creates knowledge to improve performance and learning, how it develops and guides its workforce to improve operational effectiveness and deliver the most value to its customers.

"The entire team of category leads and writers did an outstanding job working together and putting this packet together," said Weber. "The leadership of the South Dakota Guard also had a significant impact in the effort through their adamant support and input throughout the development of the ACOE packet."

By using criteria established for the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award as a framework for performance assessment, the ACOE program helps participating Army installations/communities focus on providing excellence in facilities and services in support of soldiers, their families and civilians. Baldrige-based performance assessments provide opportunities to identify best practices in installation management and reveal potential opportunities to apply appropriate performance improvement tools.

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NGB CHIEF VISITS GOLDEN COYOTE EXERCISE

The Chief of the National Guard Bureau, Gen. Frank J. Grass, visited the 29th annual Golden Coyote training exercise this week in western and central South Dakota. As a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Frank J. Grass serves as a military adviser to the President, Secretary of Defense, National Security Council and is the Department of Defense's official channel of communication to the governors and state adjutants general on all matters pertaining to the National Guard. He is responsible for ensuring that the more than 470,000 Army and Air National Guard personnel are accessible, capable, and ready to protect the homeland and to provide combat resources to the Army and Air Force.



Hosted by the South Dakota Army National Guard and held in the Black Hills National Forest and Custer State Park – the two-week exercise provides National Guard, Reserve and active-duty military units with relevant training opportunities in support of overseas contingency operations and homeland defense.

Gen. Grass observed one of the largest National Guard operated exercises in the country, and witnessed units train on their equipment and employ tactics, as well as complete various humanitarian service and engineer projects that help improve the forest and infrastructure of many local communities.

This year, more than 3,500 service members from 55 units representing 22 states and four allied nations are participating in the exercise. Units come from multiple branches of military service – Army, Navy and Air Force – to conduct combat support and combat service support missions in a realistic environment and work together to create an invaluable training experience.

Gen. Grass met with members of the 730th Area Support Medical Company, SDARNG, who are conducted medical readiness training exercises in partnership with the Lower Brule Indian Health Services. The unit provided immunizations, physicals and health education to IHS patients.



NGB CHIEF VISITS GOLDEN COYOTE EXERCISE—(CONTINUE)

Gen. Grass also had the opportunity to see soldiers from the 1195th Transportation Company, Nebraska Army National Guard, deliver and unload forest timber to members of the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe at Fort Thompson. The timber-haul mission provides for the transportation of forest wood to many Native American communities throughout western and central South Dakota for heating, construction, and ceremonial use.

In addition to the community service projects, Gen. Grass observed service members participate in numerous warrior training tasks and battle drills, such as urban combat operations,



land navigation, first aid, casualty evacuation, and day and night convoy operations. This provides a valuable opportunity for units to train on skills needed for any future overseas deployment.

Missions for the Golden Coyote exercise are mainly conducted throughout the Black Hills and surrounding area, both in local urban areas and remote wilderness sites. The exercise began June 8 and continues until June 22. This year, exercise participants are also conducting missions at Camp Guernsey, WY, in partnership with the Wyoming Army National Guard.



SECRETARY ZIMMERMAN ATTENDS SD AMERICAN LEGION CONVENTION

Secretary Zimmerman attended the South Dakota American Legion's state convention in Rapid City last weekend. With record setting attendance at all facets of the convention, speakers drove home the importance of working for and with the veterans.

During his banquet address Friday evening, Zimmerman focused on the American Legion's four pillars (Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation, National Security, Americanism, and Children and Youth) and how they parallel the goals and the missions of the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs. He stressed that working together we can continue to strengthen the pillars that improve the lives of our veterans.

Zimmerman shared stories that he has encountered with veterans and the need for all of us to work together to ensure that we are reaching South Dakota's 75,000 veterans and their families.



GOVERNOR CANCELS SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Because of good news recently received concerning the State Veterans Home project, Governor Daugaard has canceled the special legislative session which was scheduled for June 22, 2013.

At the time, we believed that delaying the project could jeopardize the approximately \$23 million construction grant from the federal VA. A special session was the only way to appropriate the necessary funds without delaying the project.

That is no longer the case. We recently received word that a conditional award may be received so that we have until February, 2014, rather than June, 2013 to finalize construction plans.

Now that the project has additional time, Governor Daugaard will have the project reevaluated to ensure it meets our veterans needs and at an acceptable cost. "We all want to honor our veterans with a home that will meet their needs for decades to come, even as we maintain our responsibility to the taxpayers we serve," said Governor Daugaard.



VA TO HOST WEBINAR TO ADDRESS DELINQUENT HOME LOANS

**EXPERIENCING FINANCIAL HARDSHIP AND IN
DANGER OF LOSING YOUR HOME?**

**TRYING TO WORK WITH YOUR MORTGAGE
SERVICER BUT FEEL LIKE YOU ARE GETTING
NOWHERE?**



We May Be Able to Help!

Please attend our FREE webinar on **Tuesday, June
25th at 1:00 pm CST**.

Hosted by the Department of Veterans Affairs
St. Paul, Regional Loan Center



To view the webinar, visit the website below on June 25th:
<http://deptveterans.adobeconnect.com/vetoutreach/>

There is limited space available, so be sure to log in a few minutes early and reserve your spot.
If you are unable to enter the webinar or would like more information, please contact the St.
Paul Regional Loan Center at RLC/VALERI.VBASPL@va.gov.

Upcoming Events

Jun. 13-16—VFW State Convention—Watertown Convention Center
Jun. 14—Glenn Green Memorial Dedication—Post 63 in Lake Preston—10:00 am
Jun. 19—Hiring our Hero Veterans—TREA—1981 E. Centre Street—Rapid City—10:00 am
Jun. 29—VFW's Salute the Veterans Golf Tournament—Rolling Hills Golf Club—Aberdeen—1:00 pm
Jul. 1—Black Hills National Cemetery Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am
Jul. 8—SD Veterans Council—DAV Headquarters—Sioux Falls—10:30 am
Jul. 26—Korean War Commemoration Display—SDNG Museum—Pierre
Jul. 27—Korean War Wreath Laying Ceremony at the SD State Capitol—Pierre
Jul. 31– Aug. 4—American Veterans Traveling Tribute—Hot Springs
Aug. 3—All Veterans Reunion—Hot Springs
Aug. 4—Freedom Poker Ride—Hot Springs
Aug. 21—Sioux Falls Veterans & Spouses Job Fair—Elmen Center (2505 S. Grange Avenue)—Sioux Falls—10:00 am
Aug. 24-25—Freedom Bird 2013—W. H. Lyon Fairgrounds—Sioux Falls 10:00 am—5:00 pm
Aug. 26-28—VSO Annual Benefits School—Ramkota Hotel—Pierre
Aug. 29—Salute to Veterans and Military Personnel Day at the SD State Fair
Sep. 11—Stand Down—Wagner
Sep. 13—Stand Down Watertown
Sep. 20—Stand Down—Sioux Falls—VFW Post 628 (3601 S. Minnesota Ave.) 8:00 am—3:00 pm
Sep. 24—Stand Down—Aberdeen
Oct. 1—Black Hills National Cemetery Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am
Dec. 15—Wreaths Across America Ceremony—Black Hills National Cemetery—10:00 am



Thursday, August 29, has been designated as "salute to veterans and military personnel" day at the South Dakota State Fair. All veterans and active military personnel will be given free gate admission.

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